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NOTES ON MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT.

AMERICAN CITIES.

New York City.¹—*The Police Department.* Early in March the newspapers made elaborate and repeated charges that policy shops, poolrooms and gambling houses were running freely, and under a complete system of official protection. It was charged explicitly that a "gambling commission," consisting of two state senators, the head of a city department, and the head of the "poolroom syndicate," extended the necessary protection in return for regular tribute amounting in the aggregate to three million dollars a year. Tammany officials, from the district attorney to the police captains, declared their intention to suppress all violations of law, and their ignorance of such violations. The unlawful industries in question were generally suspended; and a few unimportant arrests made. The mayor took occasion at a public hearing before him upon a bill passed by the legislature to declare that the city of New York was the cleanest and most moral city in the world, and that those who suggested that either its streets or its morals were open to criticism were public enemies. The police emphasized their declared intention of purifying the unclean, by arresting the leaders of the orchestras in several of the large and perfectly respectable hotels, under pretence that the law as to disorderly places applied to these hotels. The March grand jury, however, took up the matter with vigor; and on the thirtieth of March made its presentment. This document set forth that, while the grand jury had not been able to find indictments against any public official holding an important office, the condition was such as the newspapers had described. The conclusion of the grand jury was stated in the following language: "We do charge and present that in their relations to these places (disorderly places) the officials of the police, from the roundsmen to the commissioners, are guilty of criminal ignorance and criminal negligence." The presentment set forth the difficulties that the grand jury had encountered in the failure of the district attorney to co-operate with it.

The Third Avenue Railroad Company. The startling disclosures made in February of the insolvent condition of the Third Avenue Railroad Company afford a remarkable illustration of the danger to property inherent in a municipal government such as that of New York. While the affairs of that company have not been thoroughly ventilated,

¹ Communication of James W. Pryor, Esq., Secretary City Club, New York City.

and while it is commonly said that the whole truth will never be permitted to see the light of day, the reports thus far made by the receiver, and the facts otherwise established make it perfectly clear that at least one reason of the disaster was the controlling influence of politics in the awarding of contracts, the purchase of supplies, and the appointment of employes. The March grand jury began an investigation of this matter, and recommended that it should be continued.

Rapid Transit. After years of discouragement, the people of the Borough of Manhattan find it hard to realize that rapid transit is now a legally accomplished fact. The contract for construction has been finally awarded, and preliminary work has been begun. On Saturday, the twenty-fourth of March, the formal ceremony of breaking ground took place in City Hall Park, the mayor turning up the first spadeful of earth in the presence of a vast crowd. The rapid transit commissioners have under consideration the question whether it is not desirable to construct galleries for pipes, etc., in connection with the tunnel.

The Legislature. The session of the legislature which began in January and ended on the sixth of April, produced the usual enormous crop of bills relating to New York City. The fact that the city has a so-called charter which is only two years old seems to invite rather than to discourage attempts to tinker with the law relating to the city. About one hundred and seventy-five bills to amend the charter expressly, were introduced during the session, and scores of others, not in form amendments to the charter, would in effect amend that instrument. The legislature has shown that reluctance to pass important bills which always characterizes a legislature in a presidential year. Bills designed to avert the danger that the city would have the Ramapo water contract fastened upon it, and other bills of immediate importance to the city, were passed only under the spur of special messages from the governor. The newspaper correspondents and other observers agree that the interests of this city were seriously menaced in the legislature by a well-defined understanding between the two machines; but upon the whole it may be said that the city has not suffered greatly.

Franchise Tax. The state tax commissioners have made their preliminary valuation of the street franchises in the city of New York, for the purpose of taxation under the "special-franchise tax" law passed last year. Under this law the bare franchise is to be valued and taxed as land. The valuations which have been made are subject to reduction, and the tax commissioners will hear such arguments as the corporations affected may advance in favor of reduction. The

aggregate of the preliminary valuations for the city of New York is about two hundred and sixty million dollars. This includes franchises and all other real property which belongs to the owners of franchises, and which is to be taxed as real estate. The last valuation of the real estate of these owners was about seventy-one million dollars. The increase, apparently applicable to the franchises now included, is about one hundred and ninety million dollars. At the tax rate of 1899, which was 2.48, this would mean an increase of nearly five million dollars in the amount of taxes levied upon the property of these owners.

The following are the valuations found upon the larger corporations, and the last assessments of property in streets by local assessors:

GREATER NEW YORK.

Corporations.	Last Assessment.	Franchise Valuations.
Brooklyn Heights system	\$7,660,000	\$30,766,770
Manhattan Elevated	27,945,000	55,499,300
Metropolitan system	5,030,000	62,068,930
Third Avenue system	2,174,750	19,728,100
Harlem Steam	4,175,000	12,192,000
Brooklyn Union Gas	2,865,000	9,516,170
Consolidated Gas	5,635,000	15,828,600
Standard Gas	1,419,000	3,439,790
New York Mutual Gas	735,000	2,703,110
New Amsterdam Gas	1,775,000	5,561,750
Edison Electric of New York	2,404,000	9,111,298
Miscellaneous Corporations	9,100,275	34,157,188
Totals	\$70,918,025	\$260,573,006

BUFFALO.

Bell Telephone Company of Buffalo	\$325,000	\$647,000
Buffalo Gas Company	1,075,000	2,191,000
Buffalo Natural Gas Fuel Company	275,000	1,342,198
Buffalo and Rock City Pipe Line	8,100	18,100
Cataract Power and Conduit Company	5,000	560,000
Buffalo Railway Company	710,540	2,631,804
Buffalo Traction Company	162,180	554,580
Crosstown Street Railway Company	550,575	2,455,735
Buffalo General Electric Company	298,735	1,875,622
Totals	\$3,410,130	\$12,276,039

ROCHESTER.

Corporations.	Last Assessment.	Franchise Valuations.
Brush Electric Light Company	\$10,475	\$350,500
Central Light and Power Company	500
Citizens' Light and Power Company	33,000	76,000
Home Telephone Company	25,000
Rochester District Telegraph Company	6,500
Rochester Gas and Electric Company	305,125	1,751,000
Rochester Railway Company	394,175	2,057,000
Rochester and Lake Ontario Railway	17,000	25,000
Totals	\$759,775	\$4,291,500

Pittsburg.¹—*Municipal Accounts.* The defalcations discovered some years ago in the city attorney's office were attended by some unpleasant surprises for the directing class of politicians. One of them, who is a large contractor, found that he had been paying interest to the city attorney on amounts loaned to him from moneys collected on city liens and unlawfully withheld from the city treasury. Had the moneys been turned into the city treasury as required by law, more than the amount of his loans would have been paid to him for work done for the city. The need of a more thorough system of municipal accounting was thus so strongly impressed upon the party managers that they picked a candidate for city controller purely upon consideration of business qualifications for the office. The new controller, Mr. Joseph E. Lewis, although he had held for many years a subordinate office under the municipal government, was not generally known and had no political distinction. The selection was virtually an appointment under the form of popular election, but the results have been good. Mr. Lewis has reorganized the system of municipal accounts, so that loose handling of funds is now impossible.

One of the illicit practices discovered in the city attorney's office was the depositing of public money as an individual account upon which the banks paid interest. Meanwhile money deposited upon city account was drawing no interest, and the disclosures caused the passage of an ordinance requiring the city depositaries to pay 3 per cent upon daily balances. By an ordinance approved March 16, the rate of interest to be paid by the banks is reduced to 2 per cent. The city depositaries are elected by the finance committee of councils.

¹ Communication of Henry Jones Ford, Esq., Pittsburg, Pa.

Last year the city received \$45,000 from the depositaries on interest account, and paid \$16,000 for interest on advances of money by them. The ground assigned for the passage of the new ordinance is that money is so cheap that the banks cannot afford to pay more than 2 per cent, but the city of Allegheny, which deposits its funds with the highest bidders, is receiving 3.21 per cent from one depositary and 3.18 from the other. The amount on deposit in the Pittsburg city depositaries this year will be very large, as it will include the proceeds of a bond issue of \$6,000,000.

Street Cleaning Department. During March, the Director of the Department of Public Works, discovered that the chief of the bureau of street cleaning had been padding the pay rolls. He made a number of discharges and reported the facts to councils. At this writing an investigation is still proceeding. The discovery was made when the chief of the bureau was confined to his house by dangerous illness, which still continues. His legal adviser has paid over to the city \$4,200 to cover the amount fraudulently obtained.

New Orleans.¹—*Telephone Service.* The last few months have furnished an illustration of the general tendency towards monopoly in the public service industries and had a railroad, telegraph and telephone commission not been established by the recent state constitution, the city might have found itself, at least for a while, subject to a monopolistic tariff for telephone service. Just two years ago a telephone company, which we shall call Company A., established itself in New Orleans as the successor of the New Orleans Telephone Company. The rates of the new company were regarded by the people as excessive, and a few months ago, a second company, which we shall call Company B., secured a charter from the city council for twenty-five years, with the understanding that the charges would not exceed \$36 a year for residences and \$48 for business offices. The new company was to be operated in good faith as a competitor of the one already existing. Five-sixths of the stock was owned in a northern city and the rest in New Orleans.

A reduction of about fifty per cent was immediately put into force by Company B., and by efficient management it won its way to popular favor, and soon had 3,200 subscribers on its list. The older company met the reduction, as follows: As an innovation a thirty call limited service, with five cents for each additional call, was instituted. This furnished service at \$1.50 for residences per month, and \$2.00 for business houses. Also for residences five party service

¹Communication of John R. Ficklen, Professor of Political Science, Tulane University.

at \$1.00 per month; two party service, \$2.00 per month (old rate \$3.00); private line, \$3.00 (old rate \$5.00); with similar reduction for business offices. The public rather enjoyed the rate war and the good service resulting from the rivalry of the two competitors. At the reduced rates many persons found it profitable to take the service of both companies.

The franchise of Company B. stipulated that this company should not sell out to, or be absorbed by any other company without the consent of the city council. Suddenly, however, news came that the stockholders of Company B. had transferred their stock to the older company, or rather, that the stock had been bought up by individuals connected with that company. Both companies, it was promised, would still be operated, and all contracts made by Company B. would be faithfully observed.

The matter would have rested here had not that which was feared by many actually come to pass. Very soon it appeared that the separate organization of Company B. had practically ceased to exist. Then complaints began to pour in to the effect that the general care of the lines of this company was neglected, that the force of "trouble men" had been reduced below the point of efficiency, and that no new subscribers to its service were to be accepted. It was clear that an effort was to be made to throttle the company that had been bought out, and force all its subscribers into the old one. Very soon there came a further announcement from Company A. that, after April 1, 1900, its rates would be restored to what they were before the rate war began, and that in the case of physicians they would be raised.

A protest from the board of trade and other commercial bodies brought the matter before the state commission above mentioned. This body, exercising the powers delegated to it, announced that the rates must not be raised until its consent had been obtained. Accordingly the question of the proper charges for telephone service was discussed at a recent meeting of this committee; the opposing counsel examined a number of witnesses, and much curious information as to the workings of corporations was brought to light. The commissioners, however, were so much puzzled by the conflicting testimony that they took the matter under advisement, and their decision has not yet been made. If they allow the new rates to stand, it is possible that the company may be prosecuted under the anti-trust law of the state.

In the meantime application has been made to the city council to charter a third telephone company, which shall be permitted to charge certain maximum rates, and shall deposit, for certain specified purposes, fifty-one per cent of its stock in the hands of the mayor.

Baltimore.—*Municipal Lighting Commission.*¹ The present movement of inquiry into the question of municipal construction and control of an electric lighting plant in Baltimore was started in the summer of 1899. It was not until January fourth of the present year that the Municipal Lighting Commission was created and its course outlined in a resolution of the mayor and city council. The duties of the commission were to report as to the "feasibility, practicability and expediency" of the establishment of a municipal lighting plant by the city as the principal matter, and to report by February 15 as to the cost of public lighting, both by gas and electricity, in cities of the United States, equal to or greater than Baltimore in population, to be the subject of a preliminary investigation, together with recommendations as to the best method of reducing the price of lighting to the city.

This particular phase of the question was brought about by the general impression existing in the minds of the public that the people and the city was paying an extortionate rate for both private and public lighting; and the question was at that time being agitated before the Maryland Legislature to reduce the price of gas, from the present rate of \$1.25 per 1,000 cubic feet to \$1.00. The actual result has been to reduce the price of gas to \$1.10.

The Municipal Lighting Commission had but one month in which to make this preliminary investigation, but secured results from cities in this country, which, together with a general knowledge of the situation as it existed in Baltimore, enabled the commission to arrive at definite conclusions, and based upon these conclusions, to point out wherein it was possible for the city to secure a reduction in the price of its public lighting.

The first conclusion reached was that with gas at \$1.25 per 1,000 cubic feet, Baltimore paid more for its lighting than any city of large size in the country, fifteen per cent more than the next highest in price. The second conclusion was, that despite the fact that there had been steady reductions in the price of both electric light and gas to the city for some years prior to 1890, and that economies in manufacture warranted a further reduction, there had been no reductions made in the price of electric light for ten years, or of gas for twelve years. This state of affairs was the result of the monopoly enjoyed by the gas and electric companies. There was only one gas company, and while there were two electric companies furnishing street lights, there was no competition, the city lighting being divided between

¹ Communication of Chas. E. Phelps, Jr., Secretary Baltimore Lighting Company.

the two companies the price being thirty-five cents per night, or \$127.75 per year for each 2,000 candle power arc light.

A third conclusion was that in comparing prices in Baltimore with those in other large cities, local conditions as to cost of material and labor entering into the manufacture were not unfavorable to Baltimore.

The commission pointed out the means by which the price could be reduced to a reasonable amount, and they are here mentioned briefly:

1. Properly regulated competition; unrestricted competition being considered the least advisable of any method; as has happened heretofore it surely results in further consolidation and aggravation of the evils.

2. By making contracts, and providing, if possible, for reductions in price as the number of lights increase.

3. Reduction of price by legislature. This has been done in respect to gas lighting as heretofore mentioned.

4. Municipal plant.

The commission makes no recommendation as to the expediency of municipal control, but indicates that if all other methods fail, there is yet this question to be determined which may or may not result in a reduction of cost to the city, and upon a determination of the matter of reduction in price would rest the advisability of a municipal plant.

The report recommends. First: the passage of a bill then pending in the legislature to appoint a franchise commission, with proper powers, and to represent the public in dealing with public service corporations. This measure was defeated.

Second: The passage of an act enabling the city to issue bonds to provide the necessary funds to construct a lighting plant, after submission to a vote of the people.

This act has become a law, and with this power in its hands, the city of Baltimore should be in a position to deal with lighting companies, and secure its lighting at a fair and reasonable price. If it fails in this purpose, there is yet the question of a public plant, and it is expected that the principal report of the commission will determine this point, and that it will give good and sufficient reasons for its conclusions, whatever they may be.

FOREIGN CITIES.

Berlin.¹—*Incorporation of the Suburbs.* The exact survey of the city area, which has been going on for over twenty years, was finally

¹Communication from Berlin of Professor E. J. James, of the University of Chicago.

completed in the year 1897. It showed a total area of the city of 6,400 hectares (between twenty-four and twenty-five square miles). The agitation for the extension of the city limits, so as to take in the outlying suburbs, seems to have died away for the present. The state government was in favor of an extensive incorporation of the suburbs ten years ago, and in the year 1891 laid a definite proposition before the city authorities, looking toward the extension of the city boundaries. The proposition of the government was not acceptable to the city, however, but, after long discussion, the city made a counter-proposition, on the thirtieth of January, 1896, to which, however, no reply has been made on the part of the state government. It looks as if the question might rest for a number of years. It is plain that no general scheme of incorporating a large number of suburbs will be adopted, except in connection with some plan for the decentralization of city administration, and no plan has been proposed for accomplishing this end which seems likely to command the necessary assent.

Co-operation of Citizens in the City Administration.—During the year ending March 31, 1893, some 18,000 citizens took part in the actual municipal administration of Berlin, as members of the various commissions and sub-commissions, general and local. Forty-five of these celebrated during that year their twenty-fifth anniversaries as honorary officials. The number of citizens willing to participate in this work is steadily increasing; 3,500 different persons took part in the administration of the poor relief; 2,850 belonged to the various school commissions; 2,100 acted as orphan councilors, and over 10,000 were associated in the work of tax assessment.

City Finances.—Perhaps the most interesting phenomenon in the city administration of Berlin of late years is the brilliant condition of city finances. Not only is the revenue steadily increasing, but it is steadily outrunning the liberal estimates made of this increase from year to year. Thus, in the year ending March 31, 1898, the surplus in the city treasury, at the end of the year, was 11,540,611 marks—nearly three millions of dollars. A part of this surplus, however, is not to be considered as net revenue or surplus income, since it consisted in unexpended balances of appropriations. This ought to be deducted from the total balance in the city treasury, in order to ascertain the real surplus. About one and one-half million dollars should be deducted for unexpended appropriations, leaving over a million and a quarter as a net increase over the estimates made by the city authorities. It is interesting to note the source from which this surplus springs. About eight thousand dollars more were obtained from the administration of city property than was expected. Over five hundred thousand dollars more than the estimate came from the city works,

such as gas and water. Of this over two hundred and fifty thousand coming from the gas works alone. Taxes yielded about three hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars more than was estimated, while an equal amount came from various unexpected sources. It is certainly an interesting phenomenon to find a large city which has to reckon year after year with a steadily increasing surplus. This springs very largely from the revenue system itself, which deserves a moment's attention. The larger part of the income for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1898, was derived, as in the case of nearly all modern cities, from taxation. The following table shows the more important items:

Municipal land tax	16,816,972	68	marks	\$4,204,243
Tax on trades	7,050,877	49	"	1,762,719
License tax	272,490	91	"	68,123
City income tax	24,365,894	93	"	6,091,474
Dog tax	488,227	06	"	122,057
Malt tax	700,499	60	"	175,125
Tax on sales of real estate	1,835,744	84	"	458,936
Miscellaneous	2,343	10	"	586
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Total	51,533,050	61	"	

It will be seen that the city income tax is by far the most important of these taxes. It has steadily risen year after year in its yield, and reflects in its steady progression the rapidly rising standard of wealth and comfort to be found in Germany to-day.

During the same year the city received over five hundred thousand dollars from the city railway companies and about five million marks from the city gas works. The value of the city gas works is stated at the same period to be over twelve million dollars. This is probably a conservative estimate, owing to the habit of writing off large sums under the head of depreciation, etc., each year.

In connection with the items given above concerning the relation of the city of Berlin to its street car companies, it will be of interest to note that this whole problem seems likely to enter an entirely new stage in the course of the next four or five years. As is well known, the German cities have very generally succeeded in obtaining control of their own water works and their own gas works. There is no doubt that those cities which own their own gas works will be compelled in self-defence to get control of the electric plants which may compete with the city gas plants in furnishing light and power. But the possession of these electric plants will certainly open up the question immediately whether a city which runs a large electric plant for furnishing light and power for all sorts of purposes may not economically manage its own street railways.

A good example of the development in this direction is to be found in the case of the city of Halle on the Saale, a medium sized city, embracing a population with its suburbs of over 150,000. It was the first city in Germany to adopt the system of electric traction on its street railways to any extent. These railways were built by private companies, under a concession from the city. The city has owned its own gas works ever since the latter part of the fifties, and, owing to the steadily increasing competition of electricity and the pressure on the part of the public for facilities for the use of this new agency, the city government found itself face to face with the problem of either selling its gas works or establishing an electric plant. After a long and bitter discussion, running over two years, the city finally decided to erect and operate a city electric plant, for the purpose of furnishing light, heat and power, not merely for city purposes, but to all the inhabitants of the city, for domestic and industrial uses. The works are now in process of erection, but the contracts for the erection of these works were scarcely made before the city authorities raised the question "why should we not acquire the entire system of street railways," and a plan is now being worked out with great care, which there is every reason to believe will be accepted by the community, and which will result in the taking over of the entire system of local transportation. Something of the same course of development is likely to occur in other German cities. The city of Frankfort-on-the-Main leads the way. It constructed first an electric plant, entrusting its management to a private company. It has now taken possession of this plant and on the first of April, 1900, will take over the entire system of street railways, to be owned and operated by the city.

*November Elections.*¹—The November election of councilmen in the city of Berlin was of more than usual interest this year, owing to the recent redistricting of the city. Under the definition of boundaries made in 1883 the city was divided into districts for the purpose of carrying out the three-class election system. Fourteen districts of the first and second classes and forty-two districts of the third class were created. In the election lists of districts of the first class only those paying the highest quota of taxes are included. The well-to-do middle class constitutes the voters of the second class districts, while the great mass of the laboring and poorer classes are included in the third class districts. Each district of the same rank is given the same influence in determining the composition of the city council. Consequently, the voters should have been distributed as evenly as possible among all the districts of the same class. While

¹ Communication from Robert C. Brooks, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.

this was the case originally, the shifting of population within the city since 1883 had by the year 1897 completely destroyed the old equilibrium. Thus, in the latter year there were in District I of the first class only 35 qualified voters as against 260 in District VII of the same class, the average number for the fourteen districts being 90. The average number of qualified voters in each of the fourteen districts of the second class was for the same year 642, individual variations from 295 qualified voters in District I to 1,357 in District XIV. Of the fourteen election districts of the third class which participated in the municipal election of 1897, District XL led the list with 25,537 qualified voters. District III had the smallest number, 4,174, the average for the fourteen being 8,342. In other words, the old division of the city had become so inequitable that in certain districts the individual voter had from four to seven times the voting strength as the individual voter in other districts of the same class. Somewhat tardily the *Magistral* of the city recognized the necessity of reform, and resolved to redistrict the city before the election of 1899.

A peculiar circumstance in regard to the old division of the city was that the districts most heavily discriminated against were those in which the Social-Democratic strength was greatest. These were the districts located along the outer edge of the city where the population in 1883 was comparatively sparse. As a consequence they were laid out on a large scale and contained many times the area of the interior districts. With the improvement of the means of communication, however, these outer districts were gradually occupied by the laboring people of the city from which class the Social-Democratic vote is almost entirely drawn. The disadvantage to which the unequal arrangement of districts subjected the radical minority in the council was perhaps partly responsible for the delay in redistricting the city. At any rate the reform plan took this fact into consideration, for it not only provided for a more equitable division of the city, but also for an increase in the number of council members from 126 to 144. As under the City Government Act of 1853 these eighteen new members had to be apportioned equally among the three classes of voters, the first and second classes together, which represent the rich and well-to-do citizens, have, under the present arrangement, twelve new councilmen to elect, while the third class, which contains the great mass of poorer voters, received only six new seats. The idea was that even if the splitting up of the large workingmen's districts enabled the Social-Democrats to capture the six new members of the third class, the conservative elements would still be certain to meet them in the council with an increased majority of twelve elected from

the two upper classes. The plan reveals in a unique way the possibilities of the three-class election system, and is rather hard to reconcile with the opinion prevalent in this country that Prussian municipal elections are entirely free from national political party influences.

So far as the redistricting of the city aimed at a more equitable division of the voters among the various districts, it was only moderately successful. The sixteen new districts of the first-class contain an average number of qualified voters of 43, with variations from 22 in District XI to 82 in District III. In the second class the numbers vary from 327 qualified voters in District X to 696 in District IV, the average for the sixteen being 483. A more even distribution was secured in the third class, the extremes being Districts XI and XXV, which had 5,136 and 8,603 qualified voters respectively, with an average of 6,365 for the forty-eight districts. In estimating the success with which the *Magistrat* carried out this piece of work it should be borne in mind that the application to metropolitan conditions of so complex a method of voting as the three-class system presents extraordinary difficulties.

The registration rolls for the November election showed 691 qualified voters of the first class, 7,742 of the second and 305,521 of the third, a total of 313,954 voters in the city.¹ This means that the power of electing one-third of the members of the Berlin Council is placed in the hands of less than one-fourth of 1 per cent of her qualified voters. Two-thirds of the council are elected by less than 3 per cent (exactly 2.68 per cent) of the qualified voters of the city. This is an even higher degree of plutocracy than was shown in the last municipal election held in 1897, when the first and second classes, which together have the power of electing two-thirds of the council, made up 3.26 per cent of the total number of voters. Such figures exhibit in a striking way the effects on the three-class system of the Prussian tax reforms begun in 1891. This movement toward increasing plutocracy, due to the application of the progressive tax principle, is by no means confined to Berlin. In the end it must force a revision both of the municipal and Landtag election laws.

The results of the Berlin election, which was held in the different classes from the sixth to the tenth of November last, show the expected gain for the Social-Democratic party, which will probably have twenty-one members in the new council. The liberal elements on the other hand received an even larger increase, winning 121 seats in all, which will give them a majority over the Social Democracy, larger by three than they had in the old council. At this writing it is impossi-

¹ Vorlage f. d. Stadtverordneten-Versammlung zu Berlin, No. 869, September 26, 1899, p. 575.

ble to say just how the 121 liberal members will divide themselves among the various factions in the Berlin council. Two anti-Semites were elected, but one of these seats is contested by a Social-Democrat. The election reflects the dissatisfaction felt in Berlin over the action of the central government in withholding its confirmation of Herr Kirschner's election to the position of Oberbürgermeister of the city. The government's unpopular "Penitentiary Bill," which provided extraordinarily severe penalties for offences committed by striking workmen also had some influence upon the result. Both of these events made political capital for the Social-Democrats. But their strength in the council remains, as before, too slight to enable them materially to affect municipal politics.

Table of the Municipal Voters of Berlin Registered in the years 1890 to 1899, and of the Division into Classes.¹

NUMBER OF THE MUNICIPAL VOTERS IN					DIVISION LIMITS.		
YEAR.	I Div.	II Div.	III Div.	Total.	I Div. down to M. Pf.	II Div. down to M. Pf.	Total Tax Sum. M. Pf.
1890	3,778	17,727	235,185	257,690	1,631.60	363.20	38,494,277.10
1891	3,571	17,885	249,563	271,019	1,749.60	376.80	41,995,670.29
1892	2,226	16,846	256,964	276,036	2,663.80	429.80	44,344,414.59 ²
1893	2,045	13,049	274,043	289,142	2,956.80	597.90	44,455,616.92
1894	2,082	12,086	274,151	288,319	3,152.40	682.20	48,270,023.45
1895	1,486	9,867	288,638	298,991	3,891.20	781.66	43,761,979.66 ³
1896	1,336	9,027	295,960	306,323	4,348.00	833.72	45,320,728.23
1897	1,289	8,929	303,313	313,531	4,851.00	869.20	47,890,294.62
1898	1,216	8,865	298,611	308,692	5,067.80	892.60	48,580,728.13
1899	691	7,740	308,517	316,948	8,333.80	1,095.40	56,057,800.93 ⁴

Paris.⁵—Public Pawnshop. For several years the director of the Paris municipal pawn shops has urged a reform in the method of appraising pledges, and legislation against the traffic in pawn tickets. In the present report of the commission⁶ these recommendations are

¹ To supplement the data given above, the above table, prepared by Professor E. J. James, of the University of Chicago, is published.

² Made after the law of June 24, 1891.

³ After abolition of the tax on rent and introduction of the property and municipal house and land tax.

⁴ After inserting the tax rates of the fictitious persons to the amount of 5,047,600 marks.

⁵ Communication of Dr. W. R. Patterson, University of Iowa.

⁶ Rapport au nom de la 5ième Commission du Conseil Municipal sur le fonctionnement du Mont-de-Piété.

repeated, the traffic in pawn tickets being particularly deplored on the ground that by this means the *Public Charters Department* is deprived of needed revenue. By the law governing the pawn business of Paris it is provided that any surplus arising from the sale of unredeemed pledges, unclaimed within a year from date of sale, shall become a part of the funds of the public charities. Heretofore this sum has been about 100,000 *frs.* (\$19,300) annually, but this year, owing to the activity of the ticket brokers, the sum is but 87,162 *frs.* (\$16,822.40).

A further recommendation of importance calls for a modification of the law of 1891, which authorizes advances on pledge of stocks, bonds, etc. The opportunity thus afforded the middle classes to secure money for a short time at reasonable rates at once became popular. In the first year 1892, 3,213,222 *frs.* (\$620,151.85) were loaned; by 1896 the annual loan had almost doubled. No increase, however, occurred in 1897, and in 1898 the amount so advanced declined some 203,767 *frs.* (\$39,327.03). This decline is attributed first to the clause of the law fixing the maximum loan at 500 *frs.* (\$96.50), a sum often insufficient to meet the needs of the borrower. Moreover, to secure this sum, due to the large denominations of many bonds, the borrower is required to deposit several times the value necessary to secure a like amount in any other place. But these causes alone would work no stronger at present than in the past if it were not that the Bank of France had reduced its minimum loan from 500 *frs.* to 250 *frs.*, thus enabling many to secure sums suited to their needs, without resort to the *Mont-de-Piété*. The remedy proposed is to grant the authorities of the institution the same power over the amount to be loaned as they now exercise over the rate of interest to be charged, etc., viz.: to fix it annually.

The fees for appraisal remain the same as in previous years, $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on all loans made. In addition, the appraisers receive 3 per cent of a 5 per cent auction fee, for conducting the sale of unredeemed pledges, the remaining 2 per cent going to the institution. The rate of interest on common pledges remains at 6 per cent per annum as in previous years. The interest paid on funds borrowed by the institution is 3.0, 2.75, 2.5, and 2.0 per cent for loans deposited for from one to two years, nine to twelve months, three to nine months, and three months, respectively. Finally the total receipts for the year 1898 were 117,885,222 *frs.* 26c. (\$22,751,847.89), a sum of 4,970,421 *frs.* 23c. (\$959,291.31) in excess of actual expenses. This leaves, after meeting all obligations, a net profit of 2,483 *frs.* 61c. (\$470.34).